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The Rubric :

Its Strict Observance Recommended.

" I speak as to wise men ; judge ye what I say."

1 Cor. x. 15.

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The Rubric, &c.

It is with some diffidence that an office-bearer in the Church of England presumes to address his clerical brethren upon the importance of a *strict* observance of the Rubric. Many, however, he feels assured, will cordially assent to his opinions ; and from all, he hopes to obtain a friendly and unprejudiced hearing.

It is singular, that while in some matters the Rubric has all along been obeyed, it has come to be disregarded in others, and principally where its observance is of most consequence—in those which refer to the celebration of Baptism and the Holy Eucharist. This may, perhaps, be partly owing to the low and unscriptural views of the nature and efficacy of the blessed sacraments, and other mysteries of the faith, which, since the revolution of 1688, have found favour among the clergy. This was peculiarly the case during the last century ; and when rationalism fell into disrepute, the majority of its early opponents, in the place of catholic truth, taught a religion unknown to the formularies of the Church, and invented in the schools of the Puritans and foreign Protestants. From this party, of course, the holy sacraments received but little reverence. Now, at length, by the blessing of God, the old religion, that of the primitive Church and our Reformers, is recovering its hold upon the judgment and affections of sincere churchmen : but, partly from inattention, and partly from a fear of symbolising with popery, and introducing what

to many would appear innovations, several of the directions of the Rubric with reference to the sacraments are still permitted to lie in abeyance. To these, therefore, the remarks which follow will be chiefly confined.*

The Rubric, at the beginning of the service for the PUBLIC BAPTISM OF INFANTS, enjoins that "*the people are to be admonished, that it is most convenient that baptism should not be administered but upon Sundays and other holy-days, when the most number of people come together;*" and requires "*the godfathers and godmothers*" to "*be ready at*

* One or two violations of the Rubric not connected with the holy sacraments, must not, however, pass unnoticed. How frequently, for example, is the Creed of S. Athanasius omitted on the days when the Church orders it to be said. Where, too, is the authority for such interpolations in the service as, "*A person dangerously ill desires the prayers of the congregation*"—"A person begs to return thanks"? or for the addition of the sentence, "*particularly those for whom our prayers are desired*" to the petition for "all sick persons" in the Litany? Again: the too prevalent custom of commencing the "morning or evening prayer" with *singing* is not only opposed to the directions of the Church, but also to the spirit of the above offices. This has been ably shewn by Mr. Irons in a recent publication. He observes: "The plain churchman's reason for not singing at the beginning of divine service is, that the Church professes to regulate the public worship of her children, and has not directed any such thing; but, on the contrary, has expressly said, '*at the beginning of morning prayer the minister shall read,*' &c.—*see Rubric.* And as indicating the *spirit* of the service, it may be remarked, that it is not till after the confession and absolution that we, unworthy as we are, ask God for permission and power to sing his praise, which is the employment of angels. 'O LORD, open thou our lips, and our mouth shall shew forth thy praise.' It is after all this that the Church ventures to invite us, 'O come, let us *sing* unto the LORD.'"—*The Received Faith: a Farewell Sermon.* By W. J. Irons, M.A., Rector of Reed, with Barkway, Herts. Not long since, the writer heard one or more of the introductory sentences actually *vociferated* by the charity children! Some of the priesthood appear to task their ingenuity on purpose to *invent* innovations; for in no other way can so wanton and absurd an irregularity as the one last named, be accounted for.

the font, either immediately after the first lesson at morning prayer, or else immediately after the last lesson at evening prayer, as the curate by his discretion shall appoint." Till very lately these injunctions have been almost every where disregarded; and this neglect will appear the more extraordinary, when we remember that the Rubric does not merely direct that baptism shall be administered WHEN MOST PEOPLE COME TOGETHER, and in the midst of divine service, but gives the reasons why such stress is laid by the Church upon its public performance. "*As well,"* it says, "*for that the congregation there present may testify the receiving of them that be newly baptized into the number of CHRIST'S Church; as also because every man present may be put in remembrance of his own profession made to God in his baptism."*

Surely these reasons are too weighty to be despised. The sacrament of baptism is *public* both in its nature and end. It is designed to initiate the infant into the Church of CHRIST, and to entitle it to all the privileges of it. And where can there be a better representation of this society than a congregation of its members assembled in the most solemn and conspicuous manner for divine worship? where can the profession before such initiation be more properly made—where the stipulation given—where the promise to undertake the duties of a Christian, but in such an assembly of Christians?* It may be remarked further, that when Baptism is thus publicly administered, the infant enjoys a privilege which he cannot otherwise receive—the prayers of the congregation in his behalf. "Who can really believe the promise of CHRIST, *Where two or three are met together in my name, there am I in the midst of them,* and not feel, that where Baptism is solemnised without a congregation being present, a great injury is done to the recipient of it? And here, too, it must be observed, that according to the office of our Church, Baptism cannot be properly administered except in the presence

* See Wheatly on the above Rubric.

of the congregation, part of the service being addressed to the whole Church, and part more particularly to the sponsors; so that when it is administered, as it too often is, after the service of the Church is concluded, and when the congregation have gone away—the sponsors being often left alone with the child,—the design of the office is frustrated, and a great part of it rendered manifestly inappropriate.”*

To return to the Rubric under consideration. With reference to the second reason for public Baptism therein specified (i. e. “*because every man present may be put in remembrance of his own profession made to God in his Baptism*”), it may be asked, Do the majority of the baptised “walk worthy of their calling and election?” Is it not exactly the reverse? and may not this lamentable fact be mainly attributed to the violation of the above Rubric? Is it not also owing to this that the blessed mystery of the New Birth has been neglected, nay, degraded (so far as lies in man) into a mere unmeaning unsacramental ceremony? that the doctrine of baptismal regeneration, so fully preached in the baptismal offices of our Church, is almost forgotten? and the precious gifts of Baptism, and the fearful peril of apostacy, are disregarded, and even unknown?

And what is the plea for this disobedience to the Church in a matter of such tremendous consequence? It has been said, that the practice of public Baptism has been so long discontinued, that to renew it would be to offend and weary our congregations and empty our churches. That such, however, is a vain apprehension, is evident from the fact that such have *not* been the consequences in cases where the practice has been revived. Certainly in the country there would be little or no difficulty in the way of its restoration; and that, in the opinion of their highly respected diocesan, the London clergy would meet with no insurmountable

* See a valuable tract “*On Baptism*,” by the Rev. W. Dodsworth, *M.A.*, p. 14. Second edition.

obstacles* to its revival, is clear from the following remarks which occur in his lordship's last charge:—

“I would observe, that many of the clergy have reverted to the practice enjoined by the Rubric, of administering the

* “Nor are the objections to the right practice,” observes Mr. Dodsworth, who speaks from experience, “at all insurmountable. A few minutes added to the length of the afternoon service on the Sunday (the time when it is most convenient to celebrate Baptism), can scarcely be thought a hardship, when the importance of the object is considered. . . . The chief difficulty, perhaps, will be to overcome a kind of bashfulness in people's minds, who shrink from observation; but this arises only from the public service of Baptism not being customary. Let the practice be established, and there is no more reason why persons should object publicly to stand up at the font, than they do publicly to approach the LORD's table. Let those who are better educated and better instructed set the example, and I am persuaded that there would be no difficulty in generally accomplishing the object. . . . If it should be pleaded, that in our large overgrown parishes the public celebration of Baptism would occupy too much time, and be otherwise inconvenient to the congregation, I would respectfully ask, in reply, whether so important a matter may be disposed of on mere considerations of *convenience*. Do we expect to reach heaven without putting ourselves to inconvenience? After all, is not such inconvenience a just retribution upon us for having neglected the spiritual necessities of our fellow-Christians? Whence come our over-peopled parishes and inconvenient number of Baptisms, but from our not providing proper church-room for the people? Shall we first make it impossible to perform CHRIST's holy sacrament decently, and then excuse ourselves for neglecting a very important feature in it, from the difficulty which a due attention to it would occasion?”—*On Baptism: an Earnest Expostulation, &c.*, pp. 14, 15, and note.

In another recent pamphlet, Mr. D. observes, “Let the Church, at whatever sacrifice (for indeed it is worth any), RESTORE BAPTISM TO ITS PROPER PLACE IN THE CONGREGATION;” and he adds in a note: “I mean, although it might be at the sacrifice of *offending* some part of the congregation, by lengthening out the service. But, viewed as a mere matter of *policy*, I am persuaded from experience that more is gained in the affections of some of the congregation, than is lost by the offence given to others, by resorting to the *practice of administering* Baptism, as the Rubric directs, after the *second lesson*. And if it be done in our shorter or evening service, no

sacrament of Baptism after the second lesson in divine service; and that no inconvenience has been found to result from it, at least none which is not more than counter-balanced by the advantages which must follow from the public solemnisation of the initiating rite of our holy religion in the presence of the assembled congregation. I do not wish to interfere unnecessarily with the discretion of the clergy; but I certainly am of opinion, that nothing short of difficulty amounting almost to impracticability is sufficient to justify a departure from the Rubric in this particular. I am aware that the situation of the font in some churches is such, that a recurrence to the ancient practice would not answer the object of publicity and solemnity; in such cases the proper course is, not to depart from the Rubric, but to move the font." *

I know of no other very important deviations from the Rubrics respecting Baptism which are now prevalent among us. One other, however, deserves a passing remark. How seldom, "*when there are children to be baptised,*" do "*the parents give knowledge thereof overnight, or in the morning prayer, to the curate!*" Good surely would result from a compliance with the Rubric in this particular. An opportunity of reminding the sponsors of the solemn duty they are about to perform, and of ascertaining their qualifications for it, might thus be obtained, and much profanation of the sacrament of our regeneration oftentimes prevented.

It may not be quite irrelevant to observe in this place, that the Rubric which directs the curate of every parish, upon Sundays and *holydays*, after the second lesson at evening prayer, openly in the church to instruct and examine the children in the Catechism, is systematically disregarded.

reasonable objection can be made on account of the time which it occupies. I would respectfully suggest to my clerical brethren, whether, according to their ordination-vows, they can administer it at any other time in ordinary cases."—*The Efficacy of the Sacrament of Baptism*, p. 21.

* *Charge at the Visitation*, Oct. 1838, p. 48.

The duty it enjoins, which every clergyman is bound to perform *in public*, is given over, for the most part, to irresponsible lay Sunday-school teachers. One link of union between the priest and the lambs of his fold is thus severed, and the less educated among the elder part of his charge* are defrauded of the benefit which must accrue to them from a plain exposition of Christian doctrine and practice. I say *plain*, because, however flowery and hard to be understood a *sermon* may be made, it would be difficult, in an illustration of the Catechism by way of question and answer, to deviate far from simplicity. The presence, too, of parents and masters, as Wheatly well observes, might prove an encouragement to children and servants to a diligent performance of their duty.

We will now proceed to the Rubrics in "the order of the administration of the Lord's Supper."† The first of

* Public catechising, in the better days of the English Church, was not wont to be so lightly esteemed as it now is. On the contrary, it was an office which even our bishops and greatest divines did not think it beneath them to perform. We read of Hooker, that he *preached* but once a-day, but that he or his curate *catechised* the children after the second lesson in evening service. It was also, we know, a favourite practice with Bishop Ken. The following letter, relative to this prelate, will shew that a familiar exposition of the Church Catechism was a part of ministerial duty, the interest of which was not confined merely to children or their parents:—"I hear the Bishop of Bath and Wells expounds this afternoon at your chapel, and I have a great mind to hear him; therefore I desire you would do me the favour to let some place be kept for me, where I may hear well and be least taken notice of: for I will bring but one body with me, and desire I may not be known. I should not have given you the trouble, but that I was afraid if I had sent any body, they might have made some mistake. Pray let me know what time it begins."—*Copy of a Letter from Anne, princess of Denmark, to Dr. Turner, bishop of Ely, to keep her a place in Ely Chapel, for hearing the Catechism there expounded by Dr. Thomas Ken, bishop of Bath and Wells.*—See *Gentleman's Magazine*, March 1814.

† In some churches the communion service is read in the desk! and this abuse obtained (until very recently) in the church of a professor in one of our Universities.

these to which I shall advert is as follows. Immediately after the Nicene creed, "*the curate shall declare unto the people what holydays or fasting-days are in the week following to be observed.*" This injunction is confirmed by the 64th canon, which says, "*Every parson, vicar, or curate, shall in his several charge declare to the people every Sunday, at the time appointed in the Communion Book, whether there shall be any holydays or fasting-days in the week following.*" The writer has reason to believe, that these directions are better obeyed in towns than in country parishes. Where, however, do we hear notice given of the *fasts* of the Church, the vigils before saints' days, &c.? I cannot imagine that, now their attention has been directed to this omission, any of the clergy who are aware of our Church's doctrine respecting abstinence and self-denial, and feel its importance, will longer refrain from reminding their people of the "fasting-days" which are appointed in the Prayer-book. We cannot expect the laity to observe the fasts of the Church, when we neglect even to tell them of their existence.*

The Rubric directs further, that immediately after the sermon, "*the priest shall return to the LORD's table and begin the offertory;*"† and also "*upon the Sundays and other holydays,*" even "*if there be no communion, shall be said all that is appointed at the communion until the end of the general prayer* [for the whole state of CHRIST'S Church], *together with one or more of these collects last before rehearsed, concluding with the blessing.*" The chief reason

* The writer has been informed, on good authority, that on the Ash-Wednesday of last year, but one parish church in all Cambridge was open for divine service! *O tempora, O mores!*

† The only time when public collections for charitable or religious purposes are allowed by the Rubric, is while the sentences in the offertory are being repeated. (See Rubric.) The Church designs that the "*alms*" and "*other devotions of the people*" thus obtained, *should (before distribution) be reverently offered upon the altar with the oblations of bread and wine, or (if there be no communion) by themselves.* Such was the primitive practice.

for this injunction seems to be, that the Church may shew her readiness to administer the Holy Eucharist on the above festivals, and therefore that it is not hers, nor the minister's, but the people's fault, if it be not administered. When the priest has thus solemnised the office of the holy communion so far as he can without the actual celebration of the Eucharist, and when he stops there because there are not a sufficient number of persons willing to communicate with him, he has done his part, and the people are alone culpable. But how can those clergy be excused, who, in defiance of the Church's command, systematically refuse to their congregations the *opportunity* of commemorating their SAVIOUR'S sacrifice, and following the blessed example of the Reformers and primitive believers ?* In every populous district, where the spiritual welfare of the people has not been scandalously neglected, a sufficient number of the faithful would always gladly remain to "keep the feast;" and should this not be the case in rural parishes, still the country clergyman who neglects to obey the Church and to shew his readiness to administer the Eucharist on the Sundays and other festivals, will incur a fearful responsibility.

Another rubrical direction, which is too often disregarded, commands the priest (when there is a communion), *immediately before* the prayer for the whole state of CHRIST'S

* "Divine service cannot be duly celebrated, at least on the LORD'S Day, without the Eucharist. The separation of it from the prayers is a corruption which has crept in amongst us, but which is altogether unauthorised by the formularies of the Church, and is alike unsanctioned by the apostles themselves, by the apostolic fathers, and by the primitive Christians. As dutiful members of the Church, convinced as we all are of the scriptural and apostolic foundation on which she stands, we ought assuredly to listen to her voice, and at least most strongly to suspect the soundness of any private opinion which goes counter to her fixed and deliberate judgment."—*Discourses on the LORD'S Supper*, by W. Dodsworth, M.A., p. 4, second edition.

Church, to "*place upon the table so much bread and wine as he shall think sufficient.*" It is notorious that this Rubric was restored from the first reformed Prayer-book by the revisers of the Liturgy at the Restoration; and Bishop Patrick, who had the best and earliest opportunity of knowing the meaning and intention of the reviewers, informs us that they designed by it to revive the ancient act of *προσφορά*, or oblation. Wheatly tells us that even in his time this Rubric had fallen into neglect, and remarks upon the profane and shameful custom of placing the elements upon the altar before the beginning of morning prayer by the hands of a clerk or sexton. Certain it is, that where this abuse obtains, the ordinance of CHRIST in his Holy Supper (as preserved by the Catholic Church) is grievously mutilated; and yet the editor of a periodical, devoted to the interests of a certain party in our Church, has termed the practice directed in the Rubric under consideration, a "*superstitious vanity!*" It gives me very sincere pleasure, nevertheless, to know that this "*vanity*" is becoming generally revived.

The Rubric next enjoins, that "*when the minister giveth warning for the celebration of the holy communion (which he shall always do upon the Sunday, or some holyday, immediately preceding), after the sermon or homily ended, he shall read this exhortation following.*" The admirable exhortation here referred to is seldom, if ever, read in our congregations (NEVER after the sermon, as enjoined). I know of no reason for this violation of the Rubric, unless it be that those parties who are guilty of it imagine that the authoritative admonitions of the Church should give place to *their* pulpit-compositions.

The Rubric also commands the officiating priest to say the prayer of consecration "*standing BEFORE the table.*" Controversy has arisen concerning the signification of this injunction, and some individuals have endeavoured to wrest from it a meaning totally different from that which it *naturally* suggests. In a litigated matter of this kind, it

must be the *safest* course to follow the practice of the primitive Church.*

One other deviation from the Prayer-book, of a very serious kind, may here be noticed,—the neglect on the part of some of the clergy to give the consecrated elements with the words addressed to each individual communicant. No plea of convenience can justify this corruption.†

I come next to speak of the *vestments* and *ornaments* connected with the holy communion which are enjoined in the Prayer-book. At this point I fear that many of my

* “Another rubric which is very often neglected is, that which enjoins, that ‘*if any remain of that which was consecrated, it shall not be carried out of the church, but the priest, and such other of the communicants as he shall then call unto him, shall immediately after the blessing reverently eat and drink the same.*’ One object of this rubric unquestionably was to prevent the superstitious use of the reserved elements. Yet we cannot doubt that another reason of it was, that the bread and wine which had been consecrated, and set apart for this holy use, should not afterwards be turned to any common and ordinary use.”—*Dodsworth's Discourses*, pp. 81, 82, *Appendix*. The writer knows of one clergyman who is, or was, in the habit of returning the consecrated wine to the bottle, and re-consecrating and using it at the next celebration of the Eucharist!

“There is another practice, which is partly connected with this subject, which almost universally obtains amongst us. I mean the *alteration* of the form of administration when the priest himself receives the holy mysteries. It is usual for him to say, ‘The body of our LORD JESUS CHRIST, which was given for me, preserve my body. . . . I take,’ and so forth. This is a change altogether unauthorized, and rather tends to remove the impression of CHRIST’s real presence, who does Himself, as it were, through His ministers, give to us His own body and blood. The proper method, as I conceive, is either for the priest audibly to address himself in the same words which he uses to others, viz. ‘the body . . . which was given for thee,’ &c.; or else, which I suspect was the intention of the compilers of the office, *to receive himself in silence*, realizing the presence of the LORD JESUS CHRIST, the true minister of the sanctuary. However this may be, any one who carefully reads the rubric will perceive that it furnishes *no authority* for the practice which commonly obtains amongst us.”—*Dodsworth's Discourses*, p. 82, *Appendix*.

† See Dr. Hook’s admirable *Visitation Sermon*, p. 38.

readers who have agreed with me thus far, will withhold their assent to my observations. I entreat them to suspend their judgment until they have heard me to a conclusion. The following is the Rubric at the beginning of the "order for morning and evening prayer :"—

"And here it is to be noted, that such ornaments of the Church and of the ministers thereof, at all times of their ministration, SHALL BE RETAINED AND BE IN USE, as were in the Church of England by the authority of Parliament in THE SECOND YEAR OF THE REIGN OF KING EDWARD THE SIXTH."

It is hardly necessary to say, that this law of the Church and State has never been repealed, and is still partly observed. On turning to King Edward's first Prayer-book, (set forth in 1648-9,) we read :—" *And whensoever the bishop shall celebrate the holy communion in the Church, or execute any other public ministration, he shall have upon him, beside his rochet, a surplice or alb, and a cope or vestment, and also his pastoral staff in his hand, or else borne or holden by his chaplain.* Upon the day and at the time appointed for the ministration of the holy communion, the priest that shall execute the holy ministry shall put upon him the vesture appointed for that ministration; that is to say, a white alb plain, with a vestment or cope. And when there be many priests or deacons, then so many shall be ready to help the priest in the ministration as shall be requisite, and shall have upon them likewise the vestures appointed for their ministry; that is to say, albs with tunicles. Upon Wednesdays and Fridays the English Litany shall be sung in all places, after such form as is appointed by the King's injunctions. And though there be none to communicate with the priest, yet these days (after the Litany ended) the priest shall put upon him a*

* No mention is here made of that very ancient and beautiful part of the episcopal dress—the mitre: but in the original frontispiece to Cranmer's *Catechismus*, "set forth" about the same time as Edward's first Prayer-book, the bishops are represented wearing their copes and mitres, and with their pastoral staffs in their hands.

plain alb or surplice, with a cope, and say all things at the altar (appointed to be said at the celebration of the LORD'S Supper), until after the offertory."*

Among the ORNAMENTS of the Church in use in the second year of Edward VI. were *two lights*. These are enjoined by the royal injunctions, and ratified by the act of uniformity. They were to be set upon the altar, as a significant ceremony, to represent the light which CHRIST'S Gospel brought into the world. It is worthy of notice that this was commanded in the very same injunction which forbade all other lights and tapers that were previously accustomed to be placed before shrines and images. These lights, "used time out of mind in the Church," are still retained in many of our cathedral and collegiate churches and chapels; although, by a strange inconsistency, they have long been banished from most parish churches.

At what time the ecclesiastical vestments, above prescribed, fell into disuse, cannot accurately be ascertained. Both the *advertisements* of Elizabeth, and the canons of 1603, direct the principal minister to wear a cope when celebrating the holy communion in cathedral and collegiate churches. So late as 1681, we read of the tapers, *rich embroidered copes, vestments, &c.*, used in the Cathedral of Durham;† and a correspondent in the *British Magazine* informs us that the cope "was used in Brasenose College, Oxford, during the last century; and that copes still exist, although not used, in Durham Cathedral."‡

And now, if it be asked, "Does the writer wish the restoration of copes and altar-lights?" he answers unreserv-

* How is it that surplices have not been cast off, as well as copes and albs, since they all are enjoined by the *same* act of the legislature?

† *Thoresby's Diary*, vol. i. p. 75. Quoted by Dr. Hook in the *Appendix* to his *Visitation Sermon*. First edit. p. 158.

‡ *Brit. Mag.*, No. 31, p. 40. This is perfectly true. These copes were presented by Charles I., and are preserved in a side vestry. In the summer of 1836, I saw and put on the remains of a cope served in Ely Cathedral.

edly in the *affirmative*. We have accustomed ourselves to talk about the "beautiful simplicity" (a cant phrase coined by the Puritans) of our faith and ritual, and the "spirituality" of religion, till we have almost persuaded ourselves that any thing is good enough to devote to the outward service of the sanctuary.* A solemn and imposing ritual, and rich and costly temples, are, however, sanctioned alike by Scripture and antiquity. That they are not displeasing to the ALMIGHTY, but quite the contrary, the splendour of the ancient ceremonial and sanctuary affords sufficient proof. The sentiment which prompted the King of Israel to exclaim, "See now, I dwell in an house of cedar, but the ark of God dwelleth within curtains;"† and "neither will I offer unto the LORD my God of that which doth cost me nothing,"‡ — must be as praiseworthy now as in the days of David. What was a right feeling then, is a right feeling still. The early Christians, as soon as they were able, erected sumptuous temples.§ It is sometimes urged against a splendid worship, that it addresses itself too much to the imagination; as if, in the estimation of sound philosophy, it were an egregious offence to address the imagination, which is one of the powers of the soul given to vivify and govern the interior man. "We are all impressed through our outward

* It is most distressing to witness the state of many of our churches, especially in the country—to see their communion-tables, which would be thought too sordid even for the kitchens of respectable farm-houses—the soiled and torn surplices—and the slovenly way in which the holy offices are performed. Gentlemen, who would not enter any other place of public resort without having paid some attention to their apparel, officiate in the house of God in vestments which even a *friar mendicant* of the middle ages would have been ashamed to put on! In cathedrals and the churches in large towns these abuses are not so glaring and offensive. Yet here, I fear, all that is attempted by way of ornament, &c., is not done for the sake of God's honour, but man's pleasure and convenience. But I will *not further pursue this unpleasant subject*.

† 2 Samuel, vii. 2.

‡ 2 Samuel, xxiv. 24.

§ See Note I. at the end of this tract.

senses more than we would willingly admit. Shall the service of God be the only service without magnificence? We measure not with exact scrupulosity the proportions of expense or outward show in things which we really value or exult in. It is well that we should, in outward actions also, testify our value of things spiritual: the expression of our feelings strengthens them; when we have reduced the indications of those feelings by any utilitarian standard, it is to be feared that the principles themselves will have lost much of the principle of life. The leaves of the forest-tree may seem but an idle luxuriance; yet he who would amend this apparent prodigality of nature, would gain but little by his thriftiness."*

If enough has not yet been advanced to persuade the clergy to revive those habiliments and other ornaments which rendered the celebration of our service on its first revision after the Reformation so beautiful and imposing, I would further remind them that the Romanists are taking advantage of the way in which our services are performed, to win over our people to their communion. They know that the simplicity which we boast of is uncongenial to human nature, and consequently labour (and successfully), by appealing to the senses,† to influence the judgment through the imagination. If we would but learn wisdom in this instance from our adversaries, and oppose them (so far as is lawful) with their own weapons, they would lose one great advantage over us which they now possess. In all our towns and cities the service of the Anglican Church (if

* Dr. Pusey on *Cathedral Institutions*. Second edit. pp. 7, 8.

† Let me not be mistaken. I would deprecate as much as any that *sensualizing* of religion which is a besetting sin of the Romanists—I would only make that legitimate use of sensible objects which is alike sanctioned by reason, sound philosophy, and the Christianity of the Bible; and the reader will perceive that I am only recommending a return to *that degree* of splendour, and to those comely ceremonies, which our own Reformers thought fit to retain on the emancipation of our Church from the papal dominion.

conducted according to the Rubric) might be made far more solemn and interesting than the Romish. Divested of all the mummary and idolatry, but losing no single ray of the *real* splendour of the papal ritual, it would in the end secure the affections of our congregations, and be in some degree worthy of our Catholic and reformed religion.*

There is great room for improvement in the conduct of the musical parts of our service. The Rubric allows those hymns, psalms, &c., which are usually chanted in cathedrals, to be "sung" in all churches. Choristers might generally be selected (not merely from the charity boys, who now usually shout or chant (?) the responses, to the great hinderance of devotion), but from the sons of the members of the congregation: and amateurs, nay sometimes professional singers, might be found, who would gladly consecrate their vocal powers to the worship of God.

Other violations† of the Rubric than those which I have noticed in the preceding pages might have been animadverted upon, but I think I have mentioned the most important. We hear loud protests against the "papistical novelties" of certain divines, and appeals to the views and principles of the reformers. The parties who are thus clamorous, are bound in common consistency to take heed how *they* deviate

* See Note II.

† "Many other innovations of minor importance might easily be pointed out, such as the prevailing practice for the minister to turn in prayer *to* the people: in the days of the reformers, and for some time after, the minister turned *from* the people in prayer, *to* them in exhortation, so that even by his action the people could distinguish between his address *to* them, and his address *for* them and *with* them to God:—they were continually reminded, by outward circumstances, of the holy duty in which they ought to be engaged. The innovation in this respect has likewise led to another, in that unsightly novelty, a second pulpit, which is now adopted in some sanctuaries, instead of the ancient fold-stool or low desk. Among omissions, we may note that the people (in consequence, perhaps, of the former innovation,) *too generally sit* instead of kneel at prayer, and seldom bow at the Name of the LORD JESUS."—Hook's Visitation Sermon. First edit. p. 36, 37.

in the least degree from the strict letter of the Rubric.* The strongest reason, perhaps, why the directions in the Prayer-book demand obedience is this, namely, that *every clergyman at his ordination swears that he "will use the form in the Book [of Common Prayer] prescribed in public prayer and administration of the sacraments, AND NONE OTHER;"* and further promises *"always to administer the doctrine and sacraments as the LORD hath commanded, AND THE CHURCH AND REALM HATH RECEIVED THE SAME."* If the priesthood did but consider the solemnity and strictness of their canonical engagements, they would not be quite so careless about the breach of them. Admitting, for a moment, that the practices enjoined by the Rubric are foolish and useless, and gifted with no sacramental virtue;† still, when a man pledges himself to observe them, he is

* It may well be asked, How can either party in the Church blame the other for deviating from the Rubric, when *both* parties agree to violate it in so many important particulars?

† "That the attempt, in however poor a degree, to adhere thus strictly to the spirit of the ancient Christianity, may produce a felt effect on the whole spiritual condition of a Church, I do believe that this congregation bears sensible witness. Let us henceforth call nothing a 'little matter' which may thus influence our holy deportment, and so our salvation! Points, for instance (and which I have not thought it beneath me often to dwell on), points so simple as coming *earlier* to church, and in time to be absolved, before you sing; and when there, keeping *silence* before God, and by reverent gestures and solemnized habits reverting to the spirit of the ancient faith, have sacramentally co-operated, blessed be God, in producing a change in manifold respects; augmenting our catechumens fourfold; bringing a hundred to week-prayers where a dozen once came; and almost doubling, oftentimes, the number who came to receive the most blessed Eucharist. These are, in a measure, consequences of the observance of *minute* things; consequences of a slight return to the 'old paths.' I have all my time desired to say nothing as of myself; but I have ventured to think and to teach that the Prayer-book of our apostolically-descended Church *and its old-retained practices*, do better interpret the Bible, and accord with the spirit of the early faith, than the private theories of any individual."—*Iron's Farewell Sermon*, pp. 17, 18, 19.

bound in honour to do so to the best of his ability. "If we make a vow," observes Dr. Hook, "we are of course bound to keep it; and they, therefore, if such there be, who think that they shew their wisdom by a studied disregard of the decent ceremonies of the Church, only shew the little respect they have for their declarations and oaths." Numerous are the sophistries by which our ecclesiastics endeavour to evade the force of this honest statement. One of the most popular of them is, that the tacit permission of the bishops to disobey the Rubric releases the inferior clergy from their engagements. The insufficiency of this excuse is apparent from the fact, that the first prelate is as straitly pledged to submit to the Rubric (which forms part of the law of the land, and has been more than once solemnly confirmed by convocation), as the humblest curate in the realm; and therefore the example of *any* clerical member of the Church cannot justify its infringement.

Perhaps the greatest difficulty which a clergyman may have to encounter in his attempt to obey the Prayer-book, will be the opposition of some of his parishioners; but I do not imagine that any of them (I mean consistent churchmen, for they are the only individuals to be consulted in this matter,) would persevere in their hostility when they had heard all the reasons which may be urged against the modern innovations. I am no advocate of rash or hasty measures. Let every restoration be made *cautiously*, and, as far as this is practicable, with the concurrence of our congregations. Let no efforts be lacking on our parts to secure this concurrence; and then, if our honest endeavours to fulfil our canonical obligations are eventually foiled, we shall not, at all events, have to reproach ourselves with spiritual rebellion, or with a wanton neglect of the INSTITUTES OF THE REFORMATION.

NOTES.

I.

Some it highly displeaseth, that so great expenses this way are employed. "The mother of such magnificence" (they think) "is but only a proud ambitious desire to be spoken of far and wide. Suppose we that God himself delighteth to dwell sumptuously, or taketh pleasure in chargeable pomp? No; then was the LORD most acceptably served, when his temples were rooms borrowed within the houses of poor men. This was suitable unto the nakedness of JESUS CHRIST and the simplicity of his Gospel."

2. What thoughts or cogitations they had which were authors of those things, the use and benefit whereof hath descended unto ourselves, as we do not know, so we need not search. It cometh, we grant, many times to pass, that the works of men being the same, their drifts and purposes therein are divers. The charge of Herod about the temple of God was ambitious, yet Solomon's virtuous, Constantine's holy. But howsoever their hearts are disposed by whom any such thing is done in the world, shall we think that it baneth the work which they leave behind them, or taketh away from others the use and benefit thereof?

3. Touching God himself, hath he any where revealed that it is his delight to dwell beggarly? and that he taketh no pleasure to be worshipped saving only in poor cottages? Even then was the LORD as acceptably honoured of his people as ever, when the stateliest places and things in the whole world were sought out to adorn his temple. This most suitable, decent, and fit for the greatness of JESUS CHRIST, for the sublimity of his Gospel; except we think of CHRIST and his Gospel as Julian did. As therefore the son of Sirach giveth verdict concerning those things which God hath wrought, "A man need not say, 'this is worse than that, this more acceptable to God, that less;' for in their season they are all worthy praise;" the like we may also conclude as touching these two so contrary ways of providing in meaner or in costlier sort for the honour of ALMIGHTY God, "A man need not say, 'this is worse than that, this more acceptable to God, that less;' for with him they are in their season both allowable;" the one when the state of the Church is poor, the other when God hath enriched it with plenty.

When they, which had seen the beauty of the first temple built by Solomon in the days of his great prosperity and peace, beheld how far it excelled the second which had not builders of like ability, &

tears of their grieved eyes the prophets endeavoured with comforts to wipe away. Whereas if the house of God were by so much the more perfect by how much the glory thereof is less, they should have done better to rejoice than weep, their prophets better to reprove than comfort.

It being objected against the Church in the times of universal persecution, that her service done to God was not solemnly performed in temples fit for the honour of divine Majesty, their most convenient answer was, that "the best temples which we can dedicate to God, are our sanctified souls and bodies." Whereby it plainly appeareth how the fathers, when they were upbraided with that defect, comforted themselves with the meditation of God's most gracious and merciful nature, who did not therefore the less accept of their hearty affection and zeal, rather than took any great delight, or imagined any high perfection in such their want of external ornaments, which when they wanted, the cause was their only lack of ability; ability serving, they wanted them not. Before the Emperor Constantine's time, under Severus, Gordian, Philip, and Galienus, the state of Christian affairs being tolerable, the former buildings which were but of mean and small estate contented them not, spacious and ample churches they erected throughout every city. No envy was able to be their hindrance, no practice of Satan or fraud of men available against their proceedings herein, while they continued as yet worthy to feel the aid of the arm of God extended over them for their safety. These Churches Dioclesian caused by solemn edict to be afterwards overthrown. Maximinus with like authority giving leave to erect them, the hearts of all men were even rapt with divine joy, to see those places, which tyrannous impiety had laid waste, recovered as it were out of mortal calamity, Churches "reared up to an height immeasurable, and adorned with far more beauty in their restoration, than their founders before had given them." Whereby we see how most Christian minds stood then affected, we see how joyful they were to behold the sumptuous state-lines of houses built unto God's glory.

4. If we should, over and besides this, allege the care which was had, that all things about the tabernacle of Moses might be as beautiful, gorgeous, and rich as art could make them; or what travail and cost was bestowed that the goodliness of the temple might be a spectacle of admiration to all the world: this they will say was figurative, and served by God's appointment but for a time, to shadow out the true everlasting glory of a more divine sanctuary; whereunto CHRIST being long sithence entered, it seemeth that all those curious exornations should rather cease. Which thing we also selves would grant, if the use thereof had been merely and only

mystical. But sith the prophet David doth mention a natural conveniency which such kinds of bounteous expenses have, as well for that we do thereby give unto God a testimony of our cheerful affection which thinketh nothing too dear to be bestowed about the furniture of his service; as also because it serveth to the world for a witness of his Almightiness, whom we outwardly honour with the chiefest of outward things, as being of all things himself incomparably the greatest. Besides, were it not also strange, if God should have made such store of glorious creatures on earth, and leave them all to be consumed in secular vanity, allowing none but the baser sort to be employed in his own service? To set forth the majesty of kings, his vicegerents in this world, the most gorgeous and rare treasures which the world hath are procured. We think belike that he will accept what the meanest of them would disdain.

HOOKE's *Ecc. Pol.*, b. v. c. xv. *Edit. Keble.*

We build shurches by calculation, as a matter of necessity; but of old . . . men knew that they were building, not for man, but for the glory of his Name who had furnished for them this spacious earth in all its abundance, and who was gone to prepare for them mansions in heaven, and therefore none could endure that his work should yield in magnificence to that of another. And let us not say that these were ages of superstition; and that our churches are for use, not for ornament. For we, too, may well desire, with holy David, to worship God in the "beauty of holiness;" nor can we forget that he whom we worship, when of old he deigned to give the design of one house for the glory of his name, claimed for it gold and silver, precious stones and cedar, and whatever man could give of majesty and beauty; and that in imitation thereof, God's saints have ever delighted to accumulate whatever of his gifts is most noble, for the stability and ornament of his temples. So was it in the days of the Church's first love. Even while the sword of persecution hung over the heads of Christians, and when personal luxury was unknown, their churches were wide, and spacious, and rich; as we read of those which were cast down by the persecutor Dioclesian, and as was more abundantly seen during the peaceful breathing-time afforded by Constantine. When shall modern England follow the example? When shall we wipe off the reproach too justly cast upon us by a distinguished member of the French Church? "The Catholic religion," says Chateaubriand, "has covered the world with its monuments. Protestantism has now lasted three centuries; it is powerful in England, Germany, America. What has it raised? It will shew you the ruins which it has made; amidst which it has planted some gardens, and established some manufactories." What shall Engle-

answer to the taunt?—*The Parochial System: an Appeal to English Churchmen.* By HENRY W. WILBERFORCE,* M.A. Pp. 99, 100.

II.

A "Country Parish Priest," in the *British Magazine* for this month (March), states his determination to obey the Rubric by wearing a cope; and inquires respecting its shape, fabric, and colour. Mr. Palmer, in his *Origines Liturgicæ* (vol. ii. p. 313), observes, that "the cope is a cloak reaching from the neck almost to the feet, open in front except at the top, where it is united by a band or clasp. To the back was attached a hood or cowl, which in later times has given place to a sort of triangular ornament of the same shape, which sometimes extends over the whole shoulders." The form of the cope was semicircular; and it was sometimes made of wool or hair, sometimes of linen, silk, velvet, or cloth of gold. It was adorned at pleasure with needlework, gold, silver, and jewels; and admitted of various colours, as white, black, green, yellow, purple, blue. In parishes where the clergy and people are not opulent enough to procure costly vestments, the cope might be made of silk or bombasin, and without embroidery, &c. Much opposition to the revival of the ornaments and habiliments mentioned in the Rubric would be prevented, were the clergy who agree with the author of this tract simultaneously to restore them on some high festival of the Church, as, for example, on Whitsunday, or the Feast of the Holy TRINITY.

I will here briefly remark upon two of the *Canons* which refer to the public services of the Church. The first of these directs, that "when in time of divine service the LORD JESUS shall be mentioned, due and lowly reverence shall be done by all persons present, as it hath been accustomed (Canon of 1608, xviii.)." Why our congregations continue to make obeisance when the Holy Name is mentioned in the *Credo*s, and at no other time, the writer cannot comprehend. The Canon, as we have seen, makes no such limitation, neither does the Church Catholic, which has ever explained the command, "*At the Name of JESUS every knee shall bow*" (Phil. ii. 10), in its most literal sense. The other Canon above alluded to was made by convocation in 1640, and has never been repealed. It directs "all good and well-affected people," members of the Church of England, to do "reverence and obeisance both at their coming in and going out of churches, chancels, and chapels, according to the most ancient custom of the primitive Church in the purest times (Can. vii.)."

* Would that our country churches more nearly resembled that of Mr. Wilberforce's brother at East Farleigh, Kent!







